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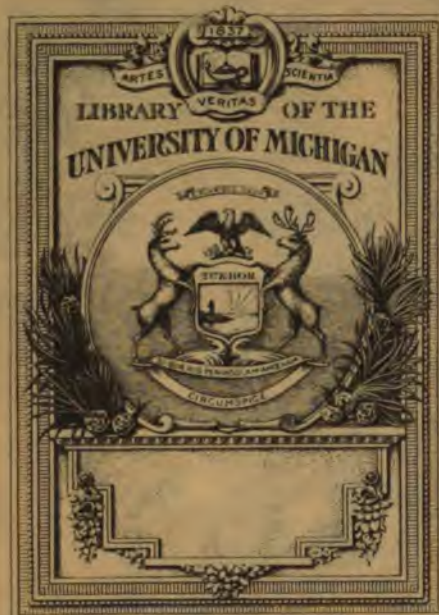
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LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION ON AN
INCOME OF \$1000 TO \$5000 A YEAR
ECONOMIES IN PLANS AND METHODS

BY

MARILLA WAITE FREEMAN

Louisville (Ky.) Free Public Library

ESSENTIALS AND NON-ESSENTIALS

BY

SAMUEL H. RANCK

Librarian of Grand Rapids (Mich.) Public Library

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LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION ON AN INCOME OF FROM \$1000 TO \$5000
A YEAR: ECONOMIES IN PLANS AND METHODS

BY MARILLA WAITE FREEMAN, *Louisville (Ky.) Free Public Library*

ON this question of economies, let me state frankly at once, my motto has always been an old maxim of my grandmother's—"Dear things are cheap, and cheap things are dear." It has often brought me into deep waters, but has always piloted me safely through them, and still holds my unalterable faith, in library as well as private economies.

The problem in hand, as I understand it, is this: Given a free public library with an annual income of \$1000 or \$3000, or \$5000, as the case may be, how shall that library most economically expend its income for the public service, keeping in view the greatest good of the greatest number, with an eye always to the interests of the exceptional individual. I may remark in passing that to the librarian of the \$1000 a year library, his \$5000 a year brother seems as rich as Croesus and as far removed from his own worrisome problems, but when he moves up to the \$5000 institution himself, he finds that the necessities have increased with the income, and that much the same principles apply as to the smaller library.

In planning the campaign of economy, the first necessity is some sort of a yearly budget, and for this I know no more logical division than that under the three heads of maintenance, administration, and growth. Under maintenance is included rent of rooms, or repair of building, heat, light, insurance, janitor service, and all supplies. Under administration, or direct service to the public, the chief item is that of salaries of the librarian and assistants. Under growth, the important matter is the purchase and binding of books and periodicals. In the larger libraries this head would include also the printing of finding lists, book-lists, and bulletins, but in the small libraries most of this form of library extension must be done through space given in the newspapers and like gratuitous means.

As to the proportion of our fund to be assigned to each of these three heads, maintenance, salaries, and books, it is a bit difficult to reconcile theory and practice. A division into even thirds sounds symmetrical and attractive, but fails utterly to work. A more usual, perhaps quite widely accepted theoretical division, provides one-fourth for books, one-third for salaries, and the remainder for maintenance. But a set of questions sent out last year by the library of which I was then in charge, to a number of representative libraries of all sizes, and a question sent to various libraries during the preparation of this paper, both brought out the fact that in actual practice few libraries are able to adhere to this proportion. As a matter of fact, the figures show our plausible third for salaries expanding to 40 or even 45 per cent., the necessary expenses of maintenance absorbing an almost equally large proportion, and the book fund conducting itself as best it may upon what is left. For the smaller libraries at least, a tentative division of not more than one-fifth for books and, say two-fifths each for salaries and maintenance, seems about what our actual experiences make possible. The smaller the library, as a rule, the larger must the salary percentage be. This for the reason that the services of a trained librarian cost much the same in all libraries under a certain size, and therefore draw more heavily upon the fund of the smaller library, and for the second reason that the trained head of the small library must herself, in addition to the formative work for which she is specially engaged, do much of the routine work which in a large staff may be delegated to assistants of a lower grade. Thus the library on an income of \$2000 to \$2500, with a capable head and one assistant, need feel it no extravagance to expend a full half of its yearly fund for salaries.

My argument for this division of funds is of course based upon the supposition that the

library is to consider as its first requisite in its plan for economical expenditure a trained librarian at its head. The seeming discrepancy between book-fund and salary fund is based upon the thesis, which ought no longer to need arguing, that a small collection of well-chosen books, well administered, is of much greater value to the community than a larger collection poorly administered. The directions for making a successful library of whatever size should therefore always begin with the proviso: "First catch your trained librarian." In the very smallest libraries of our group, where it may not be possible to retain the trained librarian permanently, she should at least be employed long enough to organize the library upon a proper basis and to give partial training to the local assistant who will succeed her. Otherwise the library is likely to prove a house built upon the sand.

Having set aside our two-fifths, or even a fraction more, for salaries or public service, we shall still have need of all the economies we can practice under this head. The first economic necessity, after a trained executive is assured, is the securing of one or more apprentices, to be in training for assistantships and for substitute work. The length of service required should depend upon the thoroughness of the training which the librarian is able to give, and therefore upon its value to the apprentice. The average apprenticeship covers a period of three to six months, with four to six hours' service a day. It should be thoroughly understood with the apprentice that no promise is made her as to a position in the library, but merely that she puts herself in line for and is willing to accept such a position in case of vacancies or additional appointments. The question has been much discussed whether the service given by apprentices pays for the time spent by the librarian upon their training, but in the case of libraries which cannot afford to give their librarians trained assistants, it seems a matter of simple necessity that the librarian have in training a reserve force of this sort, whether large or small, formal or informal. In regard to the question whether this sort of training compensates the apprentice for the time spent, I believe it to be true that in most small or medium-sized li-

brary constituencies, such as we are considering, there are high-school graduates who are glad of the additional book knowledge and general information which such a course gives them, aside from the question of future positions. And I know personally of a number of instances in which such an informal course in a library has proved the necessary stimulus toward the seeking of further education, either in college, or library schools, or both.

An important economy, especially to the library with few assistants, and those on small salaries, is that of short hours of work, and liberal treatment of its staff. A seven-hour day with weekly half-holiday, will go far toward compensating for a corresponding brevity of salary, and experience proves that in the long run, any institution gets better and more willing service out of people who are not overworked, and who have a margin of time in which to live, outside the demands of their daily work.

I know of no greater economy in library administration than that of giving the public free access to the shelves of the library. From the financial point of view, it seems clearly proven by cumulative testimony that the small proportion of books lost from open shelves and the additional care required to keep the shelves in order is far outweighed by the saving of the labor necessary in the searching for books by the library attendants, and the carrying them to and from the shelves. The doing-away with call-slips and the accompanying machinery is an item not to be overlooked in the petty economies of the small library, but the most important saving involved in the open-shelf system is that of nerves, the nerves alike of the public and of the library worker. For some occult reason, it is not half so irritating to find out for yourself that none of the long list of novels you desire is in, as to be told so by a patient attendant over a counter, after a long search on her part and an impatient wait on yours. You are certain that through the wicket which bars you out you see the alluring red cover of "The marriage of William Ashe," and that the deceitful library attendant is saving it for a friend. Whereas, if you are allowed to look for yourself, although you

find that particular red book to be but a deceptively attractive new edition of More's "Utopia" or "Uncle Tom's cabin," and nothing upon your list in, yet your attention is ultimately diverted to a book you had never heard of which looks interesting, and you go away tolerably well satisfied, with at least the consciousness that you are a free agent, and have the free use of your own public library. The open-shelf idea has been so long discussed, and now so widely accepted, that we scarcely realize how many attractive Carnegie libraries are being built to-day with a smug, tight little closed stack-room at the rear, and no provision whatever for a comfortable space where the public may look over its own books. To the librarian who has inherited such a library, we can only suggest that if she cannot carve a highway to the book-room, she may at least have a book-case containing a few hundred carefully chosen, attractive books, placed within easy reach of the loan-desk. She will find this a very popular expedient and will be saved many steps thereby.

The one article upon which the small library may most wisely economize is tape—red tape. To the public it is as irritating as an unexpected barbed-wire fence to a cross-country pedestrian, and to the over-worked library attendant it is often as the last straw to the camel's back. Records we must have, and accurate business-like methods, but let us have no duplication, let us trust the public as far as the law will allow, and let us simplify everywhere. Begin with the card catalog. We may avail ourselves of the work done by others, by buying for our catalog the cards printed by the Library of Congress for all new books, at far less cost than we can afford to make them ourselves. In cataloging older books, for which the Library of Congress may not yet have printed cards, we need not feel that we must use the same fulness of detail given on the Library of Congress cards. Fulness of imprint is often confusing to the untrained eye of the public, and in the small library is not essential to the library assistant, who in the occasional cases where it is necessary to know paging or size may turn readily to the accession book. For fiction there is good authority

for the use of author and title only. Such annotations as the contents of a book of short stories are of much more importance than its size. A card headed "College and school stories" or "Detective stories," giving a list of the books under these heads, is of more practical use than a statement of the number of pages in each book given upon its main card.

In the matter of book-lists, again, the library may often economize by availing itself of the work already done. The Newark list of "A thousand of the best novels," Miss Hewins' "List of books for boys and girls," bought in quantity, and sold at a few cents each, are eagerly used and appreciated, in place of lists issued by the individual library at great expenditure of time and money. For children's use, the bookmark reading-lists issued by the Democrat Printing Co., Madison, Wis., are helpful and inexpensive, as are those more recently issued, for adult readers.

In the reference department of the small library, all use of call-slips for reference books and statistics of use of reference books and periodicals may well be dispensed with. Of more value than such statistics is a careful jotting down of the various questions asked, and the subjects upon which information is sought, with a view to supplying deficiencies in the library, and to making notes of the material on hand. References found on a given topic should be noted on a catalog card, under the subject, and filed either in the card catalog, or in a separate reference index.

Other small working economies of administration are the dispensing with labels and call-numbers for fiction and the dispensing with book-plates for all except reference books. An hour might well be devoted to the innumerable little economies of materials, supplies, and labor, such as the saving of spoiled catalog cards and everything with one "blank side" for reference slip work and all sorts of memoranda.

Under the head of maintenance, the largest item is of course the care of the building, and here many libraries find themselves swamped at the outset by a costly building which eats into the year's income until the library itself must wellnigh starve for lack

of sustenance. I can only say here to the small library, Do not be in haste to build until you have a good working collection of books thoroughly organized under the supervision of a competent librarian. You will know much better how to build after you have worked in temporary quarters for a time. And when you do build, build from the inside out, if you wish to provide for economy of administration. Keep in mind the unity of the work and, to quote from one of the letters I have received, "economize on partitions." Have all the main working departments of your library on one floor, where they may, if necessary, be supervised from one central desk, and where your lighting and heating may be economically centralized. Nothing could make a library less attractive than the economy of light and heat often practiced in a building with departments scattered on different floors and much waste of space in corridors and halls.

In towns where the city owns its own water, or light, or heat, or all three, a little foresight at the inception of the library enterprise may secure these commodities without drain upon the library's yearly income. In at least one town in Iowa the free provision of these commodities for the public library was made a condition in the granting of franchises.

A source of economy in library maintenance is the securing of a good janitor. The right man usually comes high, but in the course of the year will save many a bill with the carpenter and the plumber, and with a fair degree of intelligence in the handling and arrangement of the books may go far toward saving the time of an additional library assistant. In everything which concerns the care of the building and grounds, no effort should be spared to make the library a model of cleanliness and beauty for all the city.

It is under our division of growth, which includes chiefly the purchase, binding, and rebinding of books and periodicals, that probably the largest saving may be made. I believe that more money is wasted in small libraries by unwise methods of purchasing books than in any other way. Perhaps the greatest part of this waste goes into the pocket of the subscription book agent as his

commission. A safe rule is that of a librarian who writes, "I *never* buy subscription-books except at second-hand, even encyclopedias." As a rule, within a year the subscription work will be on the market either at second-hand or in a trade edition, and you can buy it for something like half the price you would have paid the agent, provided that by this time you still feel you must have this particular work. The subscription editions of standard authors are a specially alluring form of extravagance. They tempt to the "pathetic fallacy" of buying "full sets," when what the users of our small library want of Blackmore is "Lorna Doone," of Lever, "Charles O'Malley" and "Harry Lorrequer," and of Turgenieff and George Sand only a few of the representative novels of these writers. It is far better economy to duplicate the masterpieces of fiction to an extent which will really supply the demand for them than to purchase glittering rows of full sets to gather dust upon our shelves.

The new "A. L. A. catalog" has done great good service in its naming of good trade editions of standard works. The smaller the library the less can it afford to purchase cheap and unattractive editions. At this point our motto has special pertinence, for surely cheap books are dear.

I cannot better summarize the economies which may be practiced under our general head of growth than, first, by referring you to the remarks on "Book purchasing for small libraries," made by Mr. W. P. Cutter at a recent meeting of the Massachusetts Library Club, and printed in the *Library Journal* for January, 1905; and, second, by quoting from one of the letters which I have recently received. This librarian says (1) Our pet economies are (a) rebinding, where we believe the greatest economy lies in prompt rebinding, (b) purchase of books, where we make every effort to make one dollar do the work of two, by second-hand and auction buying, and by importation, (c) not binding periodicals that are really only of current interest, (d) not replacing books that are not really worth while; routine replacement is a common and an enormous waste. (2) We never economize (a) by getting cheap people to do high-grade work, (b) by getting

cheap books or binding that will not last instead of dearer ones that will, (c) by letting rebinding wait.

A word of emphasis as to the economy of prompt re-binding. Up to a certain point of wear, much repairing may economically be done in the library, but as soon as the sewing of a book begins to give way, it should go at once to the binder. A promptly and well re-bound book will wear twice as long as in its original trade binding. Poor binding and cheap binding are always dear in the end. Periodical sets especially, which are

among the library's most valuable reference assets, if worth binding at all, are worthy of the best binding.

The sum of the whole matter is something like this: Economize on quantity rather than quality. Have fewer things if necessary in order to have them better; books, assistants, rooms, rules. Make your library attractive and your library helpers happy, thereby using your income in such a way that the city and the city fathers will be inclined to vote you more, for to him that spendeth, boldly but judiciously, more shall be given.

LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION ON AN INCOME OF FROM \$1000 TO \$5000 A YEAR: ESSENTIALS AND NON-ESSENTIALS

BY SAMUEL H. RANCK, *Librarian, Grand Rapids (Mich.) Public Library*

THE term "library administration" as used in this paper is limited to the organization, operation, and maintenance or growth of a library—the plans and methods of making the library an efficient means of service to the whole community. The questions to be considered are, What shall be included? What is essential? and What shall be excluded? What is non-essential? when the total income of the library ranges from \$1000 to \$5000 a year; for an institution whose income is \$1000 must omit many things that are done in the institution whose income is fifty times that sum.

We must first of all realize the wide difference between "essential," "desirable," and "non-essential." Those things are essential which, when they are omitted, make it impossible for the library to exercise its function; to wit, to spread through the community the knowledge—the experience, real or imaginary—the race has accumulated, and has recorded in books—here used to include all printed matter.

The library must first of all live, and that means a *growing* existence. It must there-

fore have the things that make for life and growth—means of subsistence and intelligent direction; otherwise it will die, or at least become devitalized, fossilized. The desirable things are those that assist the library to perform its functions to a wider and better extent, corresponding to the comforts of our family life, carpets on the floors of our homes, modern plumbing, etc. The non-essentials are those which may or may not help in the performance of function to a wider or better extent—corresponding to the luxuries of life, automobiles, horses, and carriages in the city, etc. All these things grow into each other and the non-essentials, in one environment may be absolutely essential in another. In this paper it shall be my effort to lay stress on the essentials for the type of library whose annual income is not less than \$1000 or more than \$5000. The desirable and non-essential will rarely be referred to; for it is the essential that we must ever keep in mind. It must also be remembered that these essentials apply to a greater or less degree to all kinds of libraries, whether large or small.

By way of personal explanation, permit me to refer to my own experience with small libraries. I do this because after this paper was assigned to me some one remarked that my treatment of it would doubtless be more or less theoretical, supposing that my experience had been wholly with relatively large libraries—with libraries having incomes many times that of \$5000 a year. During the four years I was in college I worked in a library (two years as librarian) with an income of from \$200 to \$250 a year. All this money went into operation and growth—most of it into growth, for there were no charges for salaries or the maintenance of the building. I recall that the additions to this library in those four years were often in the neighborhood of from 500 to 1000 volumes a year and that in two years the library (then over 6000 volumes) was cataloged on cards, and that its use then, and even to-day, I am informed, is greater in many directions than the college library itself, not a stone's throw away, with its \$50,000 building and large collection of books.

The other small library with which I was identified is the oldest circulating library now existing in the state of Maryland—in continuous operation as such since 1795. This library has a regular income for operation and growth of about \$125 a year. For a number of years I took an active part in its management, as a member and as an official on its governing board. You will pardon me, therefore, if I have my experience in these two small libraries more or less in mind all through this paper, even though I imagine that the committee in assigning it had the public library of a village or town in mind.

In the public municipal library the first essential in its administration is that those in charge of it should have a full knowledge, and a clear understanding, of the legal rights and duties of the library and its officers. They should know and understand the provisions of the state constitution, the state laws, and the city ordinances relating to libraries in general and in particular. This is of fundamental importance to the governing board and to the librarian. I need only refer to the fact that the two relatively large libraries with which I have been connected found it necessary to have the state legislature amend

their charters in important particulars so as to prevent a possible serious loss to these libraries. The importance of these legal details was further impressed upon us in Grand Rapids by the fact that only a little over a month ago our library came near losing almost \$6000. for its book fund—money that comes to it through a provision of the state constitution—because of a clerical omission in the office of the city board of education in reporting to the state superintendent of public instruction the number of children of school age in the city. As it was, legal processes had to be resorted to to protect the library, and the matter was straightened out by a special trip to Lansing and by keeping one of the county offices open after the usual time of closing on the last day of the year when the state constitution permitted a correction of the error.

Another instance of the importance of these legal details is found in the last report of the Michigan State Board of Library Commissioners, according to which, and to a recent remark by the president of that board, it appears that in the state of Michigan at least \$50,000 a year is being diverted from library purposes, as provided for in the state constitution, simply because various library governing boards in the state do not know their legal rights or have refused to exercise them.

A second essential is that the governing board of the library—regardless of whether its members are appointed or elected, whether it contains three members or thirty or the ideal number of five or seven—and the librarian should have a full understanding of the functions of each, for both have very definite duties to perform in the administration of a library. The board represents the whole community and is presumably chosen to make the library an efficient means of public education and recreation, and I take it for granted that the ideal of "spoils"—politics—personal, social, or religious—is excluded from the management of the library. The board should determine the general policy of the library and its administration, regulate the scale of expenditures, salaries, etc.; and I assume that the members of the board are disposed to deal justly and fairly in regard to salaries, hours, and vacations, ever mindful of the fact that reasonably happy

circumstances are essential for the best service. The position of the board, therefore, is that of stewardship for the people, and the people have a right to demand that it be exercised. If any member of the board finds that his interest is not sufficient for him to give the library the little time that is required, he owes it to the library and to the community to resign; and the community owes it to itself to remind him of this fact, should he forget it.

The librarian should be the executive officer of the board, and as such be responsible to them for the execution of the plans and purposes of the library. It is presumed that he has at least some knowledge and expertness in the profession of librarianship. The librarian, therefore, should have a free hand in developing and managing the internal and technical features of the library, control the assistants, detail the work they are to do, including in this the work of the janitor, and, in general, have full control of the detailed work of the library. As a rule and under normal circumstances the librarian should represent the library before the community and all the employees before the board. With the advice and consent of the board the librarian should have the right to employ, promote, suspend, or dismiss his assistants, again including the janitor.

The failure of governing boards to recognize these functions of the board and the librarian is a most fruitful source of misunderstanding, trouble and inefficiency in library administration. I recall cases where individual members of the board were in the habit of coming to the library and directing the librarian or the assistants as to the details of routine work—set the assistants to doing something different from what was assigned them by the librarian, set about doing things generally without consulting or regarding the librarian. When such cases arise the librarian should insist upon his rights. He is the executive officer of the whole board and not of any individual member. If the librarian is incapable of directing or doing this work satisfactorily the board should employ another librarian and not disorganize the whole institution by attempting to right a wrong thing in the wrong way, thereby making the last condition worse than the first.

I have in mind now an instance where a library was disorganized and much hard feeling engendered—a hard feeling that exists to-day, years after the occurrence—by a member of the board on her own motion coming in and moving and rearranging a large lot of books in the absence of the librarian, thereby causing great confusion. I said “her,” for it was a woman on the board who did it. Is this the reason one often finds, especially among women on a library staff, a strong prejudice against women on the board? In more than one instance I have heard women say that men on governing boards are much less likely to take a hand in the details of the work. Men, it seems, are more likely to look for ultimate results, and for that reason they are more likely to permit the librarian and the staff to work them out in their own way. I cannot speak from experience on this point, for I have had men only on my library boards.

On the other hand, the deadly blight arising from lack of intelligent interest is much more likely to occur among men on a board than among women. Nothing can be more discouraging to a librarian than to have every plan for the improvement of the library held up by an uninterested, inactive board. Such a blight will in the long run affect the whole library and destroy much of its usefulness. I believe, therefore, that on the whole the misdirected interest that may arise on the part of women is better for the library, though harder for the librarian and the staff, than the paralyzing effect that may come from the persistent lack of interest, inactivity, and inattention to obvious duties, on the part of men.

Another essential is that the librarian and the staff should know the history and spirit of the institution. They are part of an organization that has a life and a spirit, things that are rooted in the past. They can accomplish the best results only when all consciously realize the aims and purposes for which they are working. There should be a very definite plan in the mind of the librarian, and the whole staff should be taken into the scheme of the plan, so that all can work together in an atmosphere of freedom—a freedom which is soon felt by the public and which alone can produce the best results.

To a large part of the general public the library suggests a building—usually a Carnegie building; and many persons think that a building is the first thing that is necessary. (If I were a Mark Twain I should like to digress at this point to tell of some of the things that happen to a town when Mr. Carnegie offers it a library. This subject has never received adequate treatment.) As a matter of fact, a building is the last thing necessary for any library and especially a library having an income of from \$1000 to \$5000 a year. A building is a good thing. It makes the library mean more to the public, and it stands for and insures the permanency of the institution. It is an evidence of better things hoped for; but I believe that a library with an income of only \$1000 should not have a building at all, if the maintenance of this building is to absorb practically all of its income. Let trustees have a realizing sense of what can and cannot be done with \$1000 a year before assuming the fixed charges that go with a building. It is often wiser to wait for a larger income, and in the meantime much better results will be accomplished for the community if rented quarters are secured and the money put into books and the librarian. It is indeed giving a stone instead of bread when so large a proportion of the total income is absorbed in maintaining a building, starving and freezing the life out of the library for the sake of the things that count for little in the real work it has to do.

And right here I wish to call attention to one non-essential in a library building for a small library, and that is the idea that it must be fireproof. Fireproof materials cost from 25 to 30 times as much as some of the materials that would serve every purpose in the working of the library. A library building in a small town need not be built with the idea that it is competing with a safe-deposit company, where the fundamental idea is a safe place for storage. Libraries should be built and administered to keep books outside of the building as far as possible—in the hands of the readers. The few things that are really in need of safety against fire can be preserved much more cheaply in a substantial safe or vault than in a whole building built on the vault plan, with its expensive steel stacks and shelves.

The smallest town can start a library without a building, and scores of towns bear witness to the fact that they can erect the building when they are ready for it without waiting for some one to present it. I have a special admiration for such towns. They have the true spirit of true democracy.

If, however, it is offered a building—a Carnegie building, for example—what shall the town do? If it has no library, here is an opportunity to start one. Accept the gift. Then consult a librarian before consulting an architect. It is of the greatest importance for the small library to have its building planned so that its operation is as inexpensive as possible. Build it to save light and coal; build it to save work in keeping it neat and clean—mahogany furniture, polished brass fixtures, and marble floors, for example, add immensely to the cost of janitor service; build it to allow for growth and extension; and finally, build so that one person can control all the rooms and do all the work for the public in all but the busiest hours.

I believe in fine buildings, handsome fittings and all that goes with them; but it is a sin against the community when these things are put in and administered at the expense of the service that really counts in forming the lives and characters of the citizens. Such things are desirable—not essential. What a fine, large building means in expense for its care and maintenance may be realized from the fact that the new Ryerson Public Library building in Grand Rapids costs in one year nearly \$5000 more than the old wholly inadequate quarters of the library, simply to keep it in condition that regular library work may be done in it. I may add, however, that such a building is worth much to a community simply as a work of art. It ought, however, to be clearly understood that extra provision is made for its care and maintenance on that score, as the city of Grand Rapids is doing and takes pride in doing.

Those in charge of a public library are caring for property that belongs to other people. It is essential that adequate records and accounts be kept of all money received and expended, so that an intelligent report of one's stewardship can be given at any time. But

in book-keeping, as in all other things, eliminate every possible bit of red tape.

It seems to me that many libraries are woefully lacking in their methods of book-keeping—concealing rather than explaining what they did with the public money. Often the methods of book-keeping are beyond the control of the library authorities, being prescribed by city ordinance. Instances are not unknown where the librarian must sing his name half a dozen times in the various steps connected with every purchase for the library. I should like, however, to see a great reform in this direction—clearness and the exclusion of red tape. I recall selling a book to a library, and the bill for \$1.50 came back to me for receipt containing the names of eight different officials through whose hands it passed before payment could be made. Avoid such foolishness as you would the plague.

Good books, adapted to the needs of the particular community, are the life blood of the library, for the right use of them is the end and aim of the library. It is essential to have a constant supply of them—better, I believe, to add small lots frequently than a relatively large lot once a year. Accept all kinds of books as gifts with the clear understanding that you reserve the right to make such use of them as comports with the best interests of the library. Never, however, be deluded with the idea that cast-off books which are sent you at house cleaning time can put life into your library, any more than that the cast-off clothing that goes to a rummage sale would supply you with the clothes you would wish to wear at one of President Roosevelt's White House receptions. You can use these things, and you should, only have it generally understood that they will be used—on the shelves, for exchange, or for junk—as each item warrants. The person who gives something to a library in this way is generally more interested in it because of his gift, and it is that interest that we should ever keep in mind.

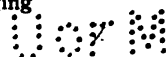
It is vastly more essential for the librarian of the small library to be a student, to know the books in the library, than it is for the librarian of the large library. In the large library to know the books in it is, indeed, impossible, and the librarian must depend on

others; his time is largely absorbed, as Mr. Putnam once told me in his office in Washington, in pushing buttons—the details of administration.

Libraries with the proper librarian can do good work without a catalog. Some of the members of this Association who are here present may recall the remark of Judge Pennypacker (now governor of Pennsylvania) in his address welcoming us to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in 1897, to the effect that he then had 7500 volumes in his private library, and all that his system of cataloging required when he wanted a book was simply that he should walk to the shelf on which it stood and get it. In short, he carried the contents and the location of his books in his head. He was the library's catalog.

Public libraries, however, cannot do this satisfactorily, not even small ones. Librarians resign, get married, or die, and then there is no catalog. The small library should have an accession book and an author card catalog. It can get along without the other desirable features, and, in large libraries, essentials of modern cataloging—shelf-lists, subject catalogs, etc., etc. The accession book is an account of stock. It is the one essential record of the history of every book; its cost, etc., in the library, and in case of the library's destruction by fire nothing can take its place in adjusting insurance. Libraries can and do get along without this record, but it seems to me that no public library can afford to be without it. Large libraries have the bibliographical tools to supply most of the information given in this book which the small library has not. Small libraries, as well as large, should avail themselves of the use of the cards supplied by the Library of Congress. By classifying the books on the shelves the small library has some of the essentials of a subject catalog.

A system of registration for those who draw books from the library and a regular method of charging the books drawn is essential, though in a small library these records can be made exceedingly simple. In a small town it is not necessary to have guarantors for the registered card holders. I still believe, in view of the methods used in the first library in which I worked, that for a very small library a ledger system of charging



is the cheapest and simplest method. It is inexpensive, however, and soon becomes cumbersome to handle with the growth of the library. A simple card system of charging is the most satisfactory. Another essential in the administration of this department of the library is that every one be treated alike if fines are to be charged. Nothing arouses opposition to the library sooner than the feeling that favoritism is shown in dealing with the public. Have as few rules as possible, however. The golden rule is the shortest and best. Put the emphasis on what *can* be done rather than on what *can't*. The latter makes for a passive library, the former for an aggressive one. It is essential that the library be aggressive.

From the various essential records that are kept, interesting statistics can readily be gathered, and these serve a useful purpose in making intelligent reports and in keeping up interest in the library; for it is essential that the public, as well as the governing board, be kept adequately informed of all the library is doing. And even then you will be surprised to learn how much of ignorance there remains in spite of your best efforts. (I may remark in passing that I believe that our largest libraries ought to employ a press-agent, with his whole time devoted to keeping the public interested in the library.) Statistics should not be gathered for their own sake. They may easily cost more than they are worth. When rightly used, however, they enable the librarian to make comparisons, detect weak points in the work of the library, and so enable the intelligent application of a remedy. Used in this way statistics are essential in every library.

I leave for the conclusion of this paper the one essential that makes all things possible in a library—the one thing that the general public usually considers last—of least importance—the librarian.

Books alone are not a library, any more than a pile of stones is a cathedral. It requires knowledge, intelligence, and skill—trained men—to make something out of these raw materials; and it takes as many years of training to learn to administer the affairs of a library to the best advantage as it does to learn to erect a large successful building. Furthermore, a librarian must

know as wide a range of subjects as the architect.

The foremost essential in the administration of a small library (and I mention it last by way of emphasis) is the right kind of a librarian—a librarian with training and experience. With such a librarian the proper spirit of freedom and of service will soon dominate the whole institution; the various personal problems of dealing with people successfully—with the board, with the staff, and with the public—will gradually adjust themselves to the satisfaction of all; the right books will be bought and guided intelligently and sympathetically into the hands of the people who really need them; every part of the work will be characterized by economy, accuracy, and efficiency—economy in the matter of binding, the purchase of books and of supplies, the use of materials and in methods of work; accuracy in all the details of cataloging and record; and efficiency in making the library a real vital force in every phase of the life of the community. Such a librarian will keep out fads and personal whims, will keep free from becoming a slave of routine, mechanical details, will interest and secure the coöperation of the public in ways that will make many things possible beyond the regular fixed income of the library. In short, such a librarian will furnish the steam, the motive power, that must be put into any institution to make it go, for institutions no more run themselves than do locomotives. Such a librarian with a strong personality makes the library stand for character and for the highest manhood and womanhood; and on these will be built the future glory and greatness of our nation and our race—free, manly men. Such service on the part of the librarian can not be measured in dollars and cents, and it never will be. We ought not to expect it. Nor is it likely that such a librarian will receive the reward of famous men, but rather that of “men of little showing,” men whose “work continueth,” through all time continueth, “greater than their knowing.”

While all of us fall far short of this ideal, it is the ideal worth striving for, on the part of trustees worth seeking for; for such a librarian is the foremost essential, not only of the small library, but of every library.

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